



**MAIN LIBRARY
CATAWBA COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
115 West C Street
Newton, NC 28658**

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Library a countywide learning resource

NEWTON—What's worth over \$5.7 million and free to all Catawba County residents?

If you guessed the collection of Catawba County Library, you're correct.

The library system, founded more than 75 years ago in Newton, serves the lion's share of the county's residents with seven locations. Officially, the system has some 64,500 registered borrowers—or 58 percent of the estimated 112,000 people living outside Hickory. These borrowers may check out books, magazines, videos or CDs at one of seven locations: Main Library in Newton, Conover, Claremont, Maiden, Sherrills Ford, Southwest or St. Stephens branches. Patrons may also download materials from the library website, <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/library/>

The library houses over 247,200 print and non-print items with about 18,000 new ones added each year. Materials include adult and juvenile books, audios and videos. These resources combined with 65 public internet computers, meeting rooms, weekly story times for children and other services make the library system a vital community asset not only in terms of service to current residents, but for future economic development and fostering the joy of reading in children.

Karen Foss, director of Catawba County Library System, says the county agency has great impact on local residents regardless of age, income or education.

"We serve everyone," she says. "Our library system, like those around the nation, is essential for a literate, educated population."

Residents turn to the library to find answers to questions. This past year, local reference librarians fielded more than 67,000 questions from patrons whose needs ranged from homework help to book research and business data.

As part of that vital education component, the library system offers a wide array of programs throughout the year, notably Summer Reading, which this past summer drew about 1,800 children and youth to the library. The county system also provided free computer classes to more than 325 adults. Literature-based programming for adults attracted another 200 people.

Catawba County Library System is supported by three Friends of the Library groups based in Newton, Sherrills Ford and Claremont.

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